

**MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2012**

Chair Abrams called the 248th meeting of the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission (HRC) to order at 5:45 PM

- **WELCOME**

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Bruce Abrams, Mary Alcock, Monica Bauer Federman, Gracia Molina de Pick, Mark Dillon, Gagandeep Kaur, Mitz Lee, Joyce Singer Abrams, Lorena Slomanson, Joel Trambley, Patricia Washington

Leave of Absence: Tiffany Harrison is on an approved leave of absence.

Not Present: Shonee Henry, George Mitrovich

Staff: Danell Scarborough, Executive Director; Pam Holmberg, Human Resources

Chair Abrams introduced new Commission member Susan Thomson Tschirn.

Reverend Gerald Brown of the United African American Ministerial Action Council introduced himself to the Commission. He invited all to participate in the 18th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast on January 21.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Washington to approve the October 17, 2012 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slomanson. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trambley to approve the November 16, 2012 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slomanson. The motion passed unanimously.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

There was no non-agenda public comment.

- **ACTION AGENDA**

Old Business

1. Debrief Awards Ceremony

The Commissioners discussed the November 16 Awards Ceremony. All felt it was a wonderful success. It was a warm, diverse and all-inclusive event with great representation from the community and elected officials. It was a great turnout and it was suggested that a larger venue be found for next year's ceremony, although some enjoyed the intimate setting. All enjoyed the variety and the quality of the food. It was suggested that a more structured seating plan with reserved tables for the recipients could be beneficial in next year. All felt it was a success on many levels and the hard work and commitment by the Commissioners and Executive Director Scarborough paid off. The Commission will follow up with ideas for next year's ceremony at their February retreat.

- **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

Voices for Children – advocating for foster children in the court system

Sharon M. Lawrence, President/CEO

Ms. Lawrence provided a presentation on Voices for Children and the services they provide for children in Foster Care. Voices for Children coordinates volunteers as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) who are adults that speak for children in the Foster system.

There are currently approximately 3,500 children in Foster Care in San Diego with over 5,100 children processing through the system each year. Voices for Children currently has 1,700 volunteer CASAs and their goal is to have a CASA for each child in the system.

After an extensive screening and interview process each volunteer goes through 35 hours of training before being paired with a child. The CASA reviews their child's legal file, the social worker's file and speaks to those who know the child and the child one on one. They then make recommendations to the judge for the case. Once a CASA is paired with a child they will be that child's CASA until they leave the Foster system. The CASA acts as an advocate and mentor to help their child gain the life skills they will need. CASAs usually spend 10-15 hours a month working with their child and their case.

Voices for Children is always looking for volunteers and asked the Commission for any help they can provide to help them expand contacts.

- **ACTION AGENDA (CONTINUED)**

New Business

2. Update from Nominating Committee regarding elections for Chair and Vice Chair. Commissioner Alcock invited all to express their interest or to nomination someone for Chair or Vice Chair between now and the January 16 meeting. Nominations will also be accepted at the January meeting. The vote will be held at the January meeting.
3. Report from Executive Committee regarding Ashley L. Walker Social Justice Award. Executive Director Scarborough distributed the biographies for the four nominees for the Ashley L. Walker Social Justice Award. There was a brief discussion by the Commissioners of the nominees and their qualifications. A vote was taken and Vernon Sukumu was chosen as this year's honoree.
4. 2013 HRC Priorities Planning Session – scheduling a date. Executive Director Scarborough polled the Commissioners to find their availability for either February 2 or 9 for the annual Priorities Planning Session. The larger majority will be available for February 9, 9:00 – 2:00. Ms. Scarborough will plan the session on February 9 and asked all to mark their calendars.

Old Business

1. Update from HRC 2012 Priority Committees
Hate Motivated Behavior – Gagandeep Kaur, Chair
Commissioner Kaur and Executive Director Scarborough continue to attend the Hate Crime Coalition meetings. Planning for the Latino hate crime forum in April continues.

Education – Commissioner Mitz Lee, Committee Chair – no report
Immigrant Rights – Vice Chair Mark Dillon, Committee Chair
The SDIRC was pleased that their work had come to fruition and the US attorney has agreed to investigate the use of force by Border Agents. This has been a strong year for the SDIRC and the Commission will continue their support.
Access Issues – Commissioner Lorena Slomanson, Committee Chair
Elected officials are showing more concern for CalFresh. The Commission will continue its advocacy
Special Projects – Commissioner Mary Alcock, Committee Chair – no report
Media and Communications – Joel Trambley, Committee Chair - no report
Outreach and Advocacy – Chair Bruce Abrams, Committee Chair - no report

- **INFORMATION AGENDA**

Chair’s Report

1. ICWJ’s Annual Voices for Justice Breakfast
Chair Abrams reported that the breakfast was a very good event.

Vice-Chair’s Report

1. Poverty Simulations
Vice-Chair Dillon gave a brief description of what a Poverty Simulation is and provided places to find further information. He believes the Commission should facilitate an exercise in San Diego and that it fits into the Mayor Filner’s agenda. Plans for an event can be further discussed at the February retreat.

Commissioners’ Report

There were no reports.

Executive Director’s Report:

1. United African American Ministerial Action Council (UAAMAC) Dr. King Community Breakfast – Monday, January 21, 7:00 AM, Jacobs Center
2. MLK All People’s Breakfast – Monday, January 21, 10:00 AM, Public Market, Barrio Logan

Executive Director Scarborough has secured a table at each breakfast. Please RSVP to her if you can attend. Each breakfast is \$50. The Ashley L. Walker Social Justice Award will be presented at the MLK All People’s Breakfast.

3. California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO) Annual Training/Conference, Tuesday, April 2, 6:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Executive Director Scarborough asked the Commissioners to reserve April 2 on their calendar for the annual CAHRO event. Please RSVP to her if you will be able to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.